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Why passion doesn't sell

by Jill Konrath

Are you passionate about your product? Think your service is pretty slick?

If so, you may have lots of trouble getting into big companies and winning their business. Your eagerness and enthusiasm may actually create significant obstacles in your sales efforts.

For years I've worked with companies who love their offerings too much. Management believes if customers just knew all the details about their incredible product/service, they'd instantaneously want to do business.

Unfortunately this kind of behavior turns prospective buyers off. Truth be told, they could give a rip about your impressive capabilities or processes.

Corporate decision makers are much too busy worrying about their own butts and business objectives.

With the continuous reorganization and downsizing in big companies, many corporate employees are concerned with job stability. Plus, they're overwhelmed with the sheer amount of work they need to get done. Back-to-back meetings fill up their entire day.

The last thing in the world these overworked, stressed decision makers want is hear you blab about your wonderful offering. From their perspective, what you sell is simply a tool to help them get where they want to go.

Did you read that? Your offering is simply a tool. No one really wants it.

But will they do business with you? You bet - if you help them understand what your tool does for their company.

I've been doing sales training for years. In all that time, I was never brought into a sales organization because some decision maker loved my programs.

My clients want increased sales, better profitability, more customers and a more predictable revenue stream. That's the only reason they spend money for my workshops.

When I contact prospective customers, I don't mention my

training sessions at all. They are irrelevant. Instead I focus on the difficulty in getting into large corporations today and the challenge of meeting growth objectives when your salespeople can't set up meetings.

Think about how you can reframe what you sell so it has value from the customer's perspective.

- If you sell software, stop thinking about all your differentiators and think about the impact you have on their operations.
- If you're a consultant, forget about your unique methodology everyone couldn't care less about and focus on the results of your work.
- If you're a Web design firm, don't talk about Web sites. Figure out how you help your clients drive more traffic to their site, improve their conversion ratios and drive sales.
- If you sell printers, don't stress how many pages per minute your systems handle. Take a look at how you can reduce the overall costs of printing within an organization.
- If you sell products or services that create growth opportunities, talk about how you improved your client's revenue or helped them enter new markets.

For sales success, you must realize from the bottom of your heart that your offering is simply a tool. Stop talking about it or you'll love it to death.

Jill Konrath helps salespeople get their foot in the door and win big contracts in the corporate market. Sign up for her free e-newsletter on her Web site at www.sellingtobigcompanies.com. You get a free Sales Call Planning Guide (\$19.95 value) when you subscribe.

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